
Environmental Education at Mammoth Cave National Park

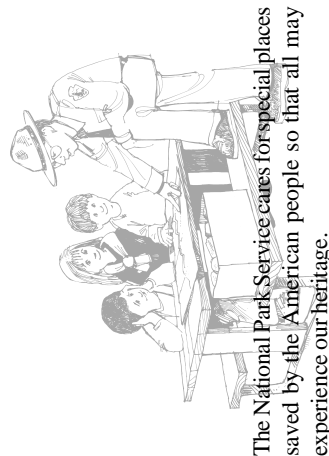
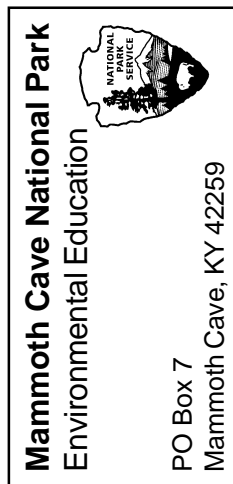
Students have been visiting the cave area since long before it was a National Park. The park itself recognized the value of a formal education program in the 1970's. Since then our program has grown and expanded. We now have six permanent staff members who conduct programs for over 20,000 students a year.

Our Environmental Education Program is curriculum-based. That means that we work to tie lessons about our park resources into the curriculum that is being taught by teachers. Whether it is karst geology or literature, plant identification or Kentucky History, Mammoth Cave is a great place to learn.

What is "Environmental Education?"

Environmental Education is a broad concept that reaches far beyond teaching about ecological concepts. EE, as it is known, uses the world around you for stimulating, hands-on, "real world" learning, whether it is in science, math, language arts, social studies, art, physical education, or some other subject. National research has shown that using the environment as an integrating concept for learning can increase science and other subject knowledge and skills, reduce disciplinary problems, and engage students in their studies.

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at

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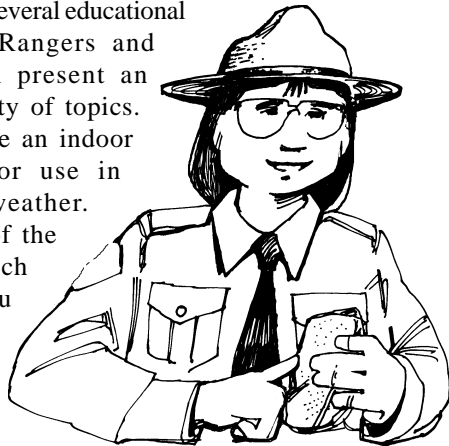


Mammoth Cave National Park Environmental Education Programs

The Park offers programs free of charge for groups that have a clear educational or scientific (not recreational) purpose. For this reason, all programs must relate to your school curriculum *and* one or more of the park's primary resources (the rich cultural heritage, the scenic and ecologically diverse river valleys, and the cave and karst geology) and/or themes (such as stewardship or the international significance of the park). We could not possibly list all the lessons that fit these two criteria -- there are so many!

Programs at the Park

A typical school group is at the park for about 4 hours. During that time, students may see one or several of the park's features (such as the forest, pond, rivers and springs, and cave) and participate in several educational activities. Rangers and teachers can present an endless variety of topics. We even have an indoor classroom for use in inclement weather. Which part of the park and which activities you experience depends on what you are studying.

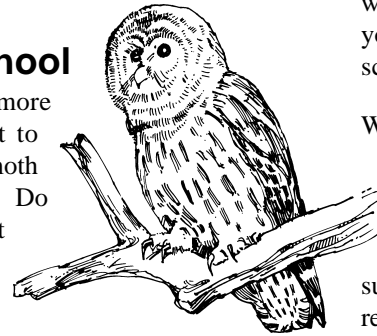


Programs at your School

Do you want your students to do more hands-on activities? Do you want to prepare students for a trip to Mammoth Cave? Is it too cold to go outside? Do you want students to learn more about one of our park resources but you just can't afford the school bus? We have the answer: a school-site visit.

We now have rangers who work throughout the school year. When staff is available we can come to your school site and teach your students there.

On a typical school-site program we visit several classes at your school; this means one ranger can do several curriculum-based programs on one day. Sometimes all of the lessons are for one grade level; other times we do two or three different lessons for different grades while at the school.



Teacher Training

Do you want to learn how to make science fun and exciting? Are you trying to make Kentucky history come alive? Do you or your teachers need continuing professional development? Our workshops can provide the skills and training hours you are looking for, either at the Park or at your school.

We realize the best way for us to reach as many students as possible is through their teachers. For this reason, we provide a wide array of teacher workshops. These workshops take place throughout the year, though primarily in summer. The workshops are also available upon request, either at the park or at your school. Just find at least ten teachers who are interested, pick some possible dates, and give us a call!

Available workshops:

Mammoth Cave National Park curriculums:

Primary Grade – K-3

Intermediate grades – 4/5

Paleontology – grades 1-12

Man, the Biosphere and Our National Parks

National Programs (while each of these programs has its focus, the topics themselves are presented interdisciplinarily and apply to other topics):

Project W.E.T. (Water Education for Teachers)

Project Learning Tree (forests)

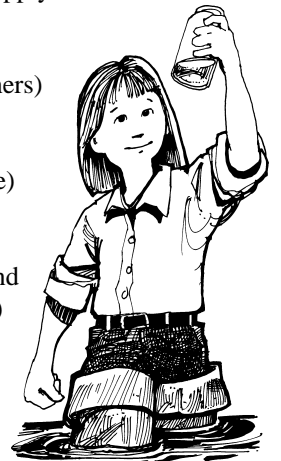
Project WILD (wildlife)

Project Aquatic Wild

Project Archaeology

Project Food, Land, and People (agriculture)

Other Programs that meet your special needs are also available upon request.



The National Park Service was created by an act of Congress on August 25, 1916. At that time Congress spelled out its Mission “. . . to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.” The National Park Service also operates national trails and historic landmarks, offers technical assistance with local conservation efforts, works with partner groups from schools to corporations, and works with land management agencies around the world.

Mammoth Cave National Park was first authorized by Congress on May 25, 1926, though it was not fully established until July 1, 1941. The 52,000 acres in the Park were set aside to preserve its unique cave and karst resources, scenic river valleys, and rich historic heritage. The Park protects the longest known cave system in the world as well as 10,000 years of human history. The significance of the Park was recognized by the international community with its designation as a World Heritage Site in 1981 and as a Man and the Biosphere Reserve in 1990. Today Mammoth Cave National Park is visited by over 2 million people annually.